



State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Commission on Children



Oral Language Development

Oral language development and preliteracy are the bridge and precursors to developing language skills in kindergarten and first grade.

Before entering formal education children should:

- Have more than 1,000 hours of experiences with books, alphabet games, storybook reading and activities.
- Enjoy books and language and see the purpose of reading.
- Have been included in conversation and treated as successful speakers and listeners.
- Have engaged in playtime that employs symbols. That includes acting out roles, designing stories, and using props.
- Be exposed to print and writing in their daily life.
- Understand how to handle books and know that print moves left to right.
- Have been read to by an adult who supports the child's view and creativity during the reading aloud.

Preliteracy in Early Care and Education

Young children in early care and education benefit significantly from:

- Being read to aloud and being asked participate in the reading.
- Understanding that print carries a message.
- Engaging in reading and writing attempts.
- Identifying labels and signs in their environment.
- Understanding that there is a connection between letters and sounds.
- Linguistic awareness games, nursery rhymes, and rhythmic activity. (Phonemic awareness, a powerful predictor of later reading success, is found in traditional rhyming, skipping, and word games)
- Letter sound matches and some letter identification.
- Temporary invented spelling to represent written language.

Teachers can:

- Share books with children, including Big Books and model reading behaviors.
- Talk about letters by name and sounds.
- Establish a literacy-rich environment.
- Re-read favorite stories.
- Engage children in language games.
- Promote literacy-related play activities.
- Encourage children to experiment with writing.

Also, parents are key to ensure love of language and curiosity in daily life. Parent and family members can:

- Read and re-read stories with predictable text to children.
- Encourage children to recount experiences and describe ideas and art that are important to them.
- Visit the library.
- Talk with children and engage them in conversation, give them the names of things.
- Provide opportunities for children to draw and print, using marker's crayons and pencils.